



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

AUG 06 2019

F-2019-07280

Alexander Ward
MuckRock News
DEPT MR 73021
411A Highland Ave.
Somerville, MA 02144

Dear Mr. Ward:

This letter is to acknowledge receipt of your request dated May 16, 2019, pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, to the Department of State, in which you requested “Documents and emails about the decision to deny Palestinian official Hanan Ashrawi’s visa to travel to the US, which she revealed on May 13, 2019.”

The Office of Information Programs and Services (IPS) received your FOIA request on May 24, 2019. Your FOIA request was assigned the tracking number at the top of this letter. Please include the tracking number in all future communications concerning this FOIA request. We have classified you as an other-use requester.

The records you seek require the need to search in offices that are separate from the office processing your request. Accordingly, your request falls within “unusual circumstances” as defined in the FOIA. See 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(B)(i)-(iii). Because of these unusual circumstances, we need to extend the time limit to respond to your request beyond the ten additional days provided by the statute.

The time needed to complete our work on your request will necessarily depend on a variety of factors including the number of locations that must be searched, the complexity of the search, the volume and complexity of any material located, and consultations with other U.S. Government agencies whose information is included in the material located. The time needed will also depend on the number of other requests ahead of it in the relevant processing track.

This Office assigns incoming requests to one of three tracks: simple, complex, or expedited. Each request is then handled on a first-in, first-out basis in relation to other requests in the same track. Your request has been assigned to the complex track and will be handled as quickly as possible.

I regret the necessity of this delay, but I assure you that your request will be processed as soon as possible. If you wish to discuss narrowing of your request or an alternative time frame for the processing of your request, or if you have any questions regarding the status of your request, you may contact our FOIA Requester Service Center or our FOIA Public Liaison via email at FOIAstatus@state.gov or telephone at (202) 261-8484.

Lastly, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001, email address: ogis@nara.gov; telephone: (202) 741-5770; toll free number: 1-877-684-6448; facsimile: (202) 741-5769.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Stein', written over the printed name.

Eric F. Stein, Director
Office of Information Programs and Services